we see them connecting past eternity with that which is to come; the two extremities being lost in the dimness of distance! God is here exhibited to us as employing the same matter, under successive forms, for a great variety of different purposes; all, however, connected into one vast system; and all bearing upon the happiness of animated natures?"

THE STARS INHABITED.

Astronomy, both by its practical discoveries and well-founded theories, has opened much to our view altogether unknown to the ancients. It has, as it were, withdrawn the veil which formerly shaded the laws, motions, and magnitude of the universe. It has shown us the shape and extent of the earth; the velocity with which it travels; with its two-fold motions, and the laws of the changes of the seasons, and the night and day. It gives us the power of measuring the immense distances of the planets and the sun—the amazing size of the latter, and the great velocity of the former. It shows us millions of moving bodies placed at immeasurable distances, and thus enables us to form a faint idea of the Almighty Power which has formed such a vast and extraordinary system. But still the mind of man seeks more knowledge than even this wonderful science affords him. The human soul would stretch itself even beyond the boundless limits of time and space. Bursting the prison of its earthly frame, the immortal spirit looks beyond the confines of its habitation, and, from the knowledge adequate to its nature, cries out for still more extended information, even on subjects which, in its present state, it is not capable of understanding.

When we view the firmament above us, and consider the innumerable stars that are visible even to the naked eye, and remember that the sun is the centre of our system, with eleven planets revolving round it, of which our earth is one—that it is larger than some, and smaller than others—we then begin to think, May not the other planets be inhabited like our world, with beasts and creeping things, vegetables and trees? May they not, too, have their intellectual beings, endued with immortal souls as we ourselves are? And we are forced to the conviction that such must be the case; for what is a world without its intelligent inhabitants, or how else could it glorify its Creator? Whether all their senses and properties are the same as ours, matters not in this consideration—their atmospheres are different, and therefore there must be a difference in the beings that inhabit them. But what are these few planets? what space is contained within their orbits?—trifling in comparison to the immeasurable distance that even man can imagine to exist between him and the most remote of the fixed stars that we can see—nothing in comparison to the boundless infinity which we can hardly conceive. Then let us look beyond the orbits of our brother worlds, and what do we behold? As many suns as there are particles of sand on the sea-shore. We must believe them suns—their light is their own, otherwise their distance would render them invisible to us—they must have planets revolving round them, otherwise they are useless, and shed forth their lustre on empty nothingness. Then how multiplied must be the worlds under heaven! If every star we see has even as many worlds round it as our sun, invisible from their distances, what then is our earth?—a little speck of matter—a star to the few planets of our luminary—nothing to the worlds of other suns. And what is man?—a little insect crawling on the surface of that speck, and amused with the various trifles that surround him. But he is more—he has that within him which will leave its tabernacle of clay, and soar above all worlds—he has a soul confined within the limits of his present nature, which, freed from the cares and troubles that now surround it, if depending on its great Creator, will live in Paradise through all eternity. Nor can we suppose that the few souls which occupy the regions of this world shall be the only inhabitants of the boundless heavens—that the whole creation which is perceptible to our senses was made for our use—that the millions of enlightened bodies, which are visible only through our telescopes, which do not benefit us in the least degree, were created to excite our wonder. Impossible, and still more improbable! for we cannot for a moment imagine that the great Creator of the universe has limited his goodness to the trifling dimensions of this earth, and bounded the creation of intelligent beings to the inhabitants of such a limited sphere as ours.

J——N, A. B.

LINES WRITTEN ON A VIEW OF THE HEAVENS AT NIGHT.

Infinity of space!—mysterious wonder!—
Too great, too big, for human comprehension!—
Man tries in thought to span thee, but he cannot.
Far, far beyond the reach of thought thou dwellest:
I see thee but in part, and yet around
'Tis one unbounded, measureless expanse—
One limitless, interminable view.
Above me is the vast concavity of heaven,
Spreading around its adamantine arch,
Whose azure sweep, enamelled with a thousand stars,
Seems like a sea with isles of living fire.
See how like balls of phosphorus they shine—
How pure and spiritual is their aspect!—
They seem the very eyes of heaven—its ministers of light.
Ye radiant orbs, how vast, how great your distance!*
And what is Earth amid this mighty scene?—
Earth, that now seems so large and spacious.
'Tis but a round,† diminutive, and trembling ball,
That, like the sparkling myriads around,
Wheel on throughout the ample vault of heaven;
For, could we, from some extramundane point,
Behold this mighty globe that we inhabit,
With all its seas, its mountains, and its lakes,
Its gilded domes and lofty pyramids,
Its noble palaces and splendid halls,
And all the other costly works of man,—
'Twould seem but as yon little drop of gold
That glitters in the firmament above.
But nobler still—surpassing comprehension—
Amazing, inconceivably sublime—
Those many orbs that through the empyrean roll
Are but the central sun of other systems;
And millions, yet unseen, are floating on
Throughout the azure fields of liquid ether.
Thou mighty, grand, and noble contemplation!
Before thee language fails, description droops—
Imagination only can conceive thee.
Unfurl thy wing, then—let me soar aloft—
Bear, bear me onward to yon twinkling star
That trembles on the horizon's utmost verge!
I see—I see another world—a new horizon now—
Another paradrome, which worlds still circuit through—
Another glittering escutcheon, decked
With heaven's armorial bearings.
Surpassing, transcendental greatness!
And where that mighty Power that framed them all—
That vast Omnipotent that ranged them
Each in their respective orbits, that thus they wheel
Through endless ages, still maintaining order?
Away, he dwells in fathomless immensity—
"Afar from mortal eye, or angels' purer ken."
Learn, then, oh man! from this thy littleness—
This lesson ought to teach humility;
For what art thou amid the vast creation?
Thy world is but a fraction of the whole,
And thou thyself an atom placed upon it. W.

* Every little star, though so little in appearance, is really a vast globe like the sun in size and glory. The reason that they appear so diminutive, is owing to their immense and inconceivable distance—so great, that it is supposed a cannon-ball, flying with unabated rapidity, would take seven hundred thousand years before it could reach the nearest of them.

† A learned writer remarks, that the loftiest summits of hills, and the greatest ridges of mountains, are no real objection to the globular form of the earth, because they bear no greater proportion to the entire surface of the terraqueous ball than a particle of dust casually dropped on a mathematician's globe bears to its whole circumference; consequently the rotund figure is no more destroyed in the former case than in the latter.